

Neilson Family History

- **1889** Wilford Woodruff sustained as Pres. Of the church April 7,
- November 6, Olga Sally Bergstrom born at Wahoo Nebraska
- Olga had two brothers, Ed and Henry, one sister Blenda and a half sister Amanda. Ed and Henry never married or had any children. Blenda had nine children. Amanda had two children.
- December 14, August Julius Neilson born at Spring City Utah. He was the only child of August Swen and Mathilda.

- August Swen---He was a Swedish immigrant. He had a sister Emily and a brother Charlie.
- When his daughter Blenda was very sick he asked for the two men upstairs to come and pray for her. The two men who came were the Mormon missionaries. The family later immigrated to the United States.

- Mathilda wanted to be part of her new country, so she learned to speak English?

- **1898** In June August Swen Neilson with his brother in law [wife's brother] Elof Julius Johanson came to Canada by horses and covered wagon from Spring City Utah. August became friends with J.Y. Card and Charlie Hinman, some of the first settlers in Cardston.
August Swen's wife, Mathilda Petronilla Johnson and their son August Julius [age 9], arrived by train the same summer.
- They stayed in Cardston for the first winter. Then they built a log cabin.
- The first pioneers of Taylorville saw a beautiful large meadow, with lush green waist high grass, the mountains forming the back ground, and a clear stream of water running through it and out again through a rather large lake.
- August settled in Taylorville [22 miles south of Cardston and a mile for the U.S. border] and his brother Charlie went to Mountain View.
- The Neilson homestead place was chosen because it had a spring of good fresh water. The land was sold for ten dollars a quarter section or a homestead. August Swen had a quarter section, his brother in law Julius got a quarter section and
- Taylorville was ten miles from the railroad terminal at Whiskey Gap. It is an area of rolling hills, valleys and treeless plains. In the west the Rocky Mountain Range running north and south. In the spring, the foothills were covered with green grass. Taylorville was situated in one of nature's most beautiful areas. Summers were quite hot and the fall an elegant panorama of color.
- The Village of Taylorville was established, named after the first family who arrived.
- Taylorville grew to a thriving community of 200 people
- the first school was held in a log house on the Vaughn Meadows.
- The pioneer people of Taylorville were more like relatives than anything else, because they helped and supported each other either in times of sorrow or happiness. They were all so concerned for the welfare of every member of the community. Some of the friends have said that they did not have all the luxuries of life, but they had each other and that made good things happen. The people who lived there all have fond memories to cherish.

- **1900**
- A new school built which was used for school, church, and social activities

- August Swen built the house where the Neilsons lived. It was two rooms first, then three bedrooms were added.
- **1901** Joseph F. Smith was sustained as president of the church, October 17.
- Uncle [Elof]Julius Johnson lived in a little house on the home place until he died at the age of 80. He was a bachelor and grandma Mathilda's brother. He had been a soldier in Sweden for 18 years. Everyday he did exercises and walked a mile or more with his rifle over his shoulder. He loved Olga's meals. He never joined the church, but he did go to Sacrament meeting sometimes. His family were Lutherans and he thought he would be unfaithful to his ancestors if he joined. When he was asked why he did not marry, he said that when he was young he didn't have the money, but when he had the money he was too old. He once decided to go back to Sweden to stay, but he came back after a month. He said that he was happy to stay in Canada.
- Julius is described as soft spoken, patient, easy going and gentle. He had a dandy horse when he was a boy. He tried to jump a cow, but the cow stood up at the same time. He got hurt and was unconscious for three days.
- It seemed that he would be the kind to never raise his voice. When Julius died, Uncle Charlie came to Canada. He told Aunt Verna not to worry about her father. He said that Julius had been good ever since he was a little boy. His parents loved him very much and he knew it. As a young man he was very helpful and a great help to his parents, he knew what had to be done. He would put up the hay and save it from spoiling in a rain, something other young boys would not have thought to do.
- Julius was the one who was called when some one was sick and needed to be administered to
- **1913**--August and Olga were married July 10 in Cardston.
- Olga had long blond hair when she came to Canada. In later years it darkened to a honey color. She never went gray, even when she died at 86, she wasn't very gray. Olga did have one strand of white hair, near the center of her forehead, from the time she was a girl of 16. She said that she had fell off a corn husking machine and hit her head. The fall turned the strand of hair white. Olga Sally Burgstrom left her two brothers Ed and Henry and sister Blenda and her half sister Amanda in Salt Lake. Her mother in law [Mathilda] said that Olga was a city girl and that she did well coming to the harsh climate, and to do the farm things, that had to be done. Many friends and family members, have written how Grandma Olga took pride in her appearance and wanted to look her best, even until her last days in the nursing home. She was a very clean person and her house was always spotless. She had a great sense of humor and loved a good laugh. She liked people to look neat and she said she had a hard time getting used to men who wore pants that had not been pressed.
- Olga centered her interests in her children. She fussed over them, especially Ralph. She claimed that he was a very fussy eater. She would make two pots of stew, one for the family and one for Ralph without the onions, tomatoes etc. that he did not care for. She was kind and thoughtful to others and it was always enjoyable to go to her home. She had her hands in water a lot. They were very dry and cracked so she used glycerin on them. After Papa took sick her life seemed a little harder. Aunt Verna remembers seeing her draw water from the well for the cattle and how she could see the strains and worries of her mother's life showing on her then.

- **1914** May 9, Elva was born, Olga was 24 years old. All the babies were born at home with the help of Midwives., except Verna, who was born in the Cardston Hospital.
- **1916** February 4 Ralph August was born. Ralph loved to play the violin. He was more like his dad, calm and easy going.
- **1918** Julius bought first car a Model T Ford
- First World War
- Heber J. Grant was sustained as Pres. Of the Church November 23.
- **1919** There was flu epidemic, nearly everyone in Taylorville got the flu. Grandma Olga was very sick. She believed that she was cured by drinking hot ginger. She used this remedy all her life for other ills.
- March 28 Delbert Julius was born, Olga was 26 years old. Delbert was more carefree and outgoing, and a friend to all.
- **1922** September 3, Verna was born, the only baby of Olga and Julius that was delivered in the hospital. Her father Julius had to drive very fast [probably about 35] to get to the hospital in time. Verna liked to help outside with the chores, by carrying buckets of milk and water. Delbert said that Verna could throw a ball like a boy. Verna helped Delbert practice his baseball pitching.
- Grandmother Mathilda ^{and August} went back to Utah. *They moved back to Utah during the war just before the 1918 flu.*
- **1923** The Cardston temple was dedicated by Heber J. Grant. Olga had to miss it because Verna had Whooping Cough.
- August and Mathilda moved back to Salt Lake.
- **1924** August and Olga and their four children, moved to Salt Lake for two years.
- **1925** Mathilda died
- **1926** Olga lost a baby boy at five and a half months.
- **1928** Mary Mathilda was born October 13. There was a big snow storm, so Mary was delivered at home
- TELEphonnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnes
- Dancing was a major activity for the early settlers. In Taylorville, like most other communities, often the whole family would go to the dance. Everyone danced with everyone else. The dance would start about 8 or 9 PM. and go until 4 or 5 in the morning with lunch served at midnight. Beds would be made for sleepy babies, which were pushed back against the walls. The young and old would dance together and have a great time. The music was an orchestra put together by local talent from one or more of the communities. Usually two or more saxophones, drums and a

piano. The perfection of the music wasn't as important as was the rhythm, but it was good music. There was a dance about every week, somewhere within traveling distance in the area.

- Three Act Plays were the highlight of the winter in the Taylorville community.
- **1931** Mary in hospital [Maybe she had polio]
- An Air Show came to Cardston. It was an open plane. Julius and Olga were at this show and watched friends [Selma Lowry] go up.
- Summer baseball were the big days. The games were usually held on the Neilson flats. Homemade Ice cream was the treat at 5 cents a cone and chocolate bars at 5 cents. Deb Neilson was a star baseball hero of the day, with his pitching and batting. He sometimes pitched a perfect game, no runs, and no hits and thirteen strike outs. Deb was a popular, fun loving guy the little kids looked up to. He played to win and put his whole heart into the game. Baseball was the favorite sport in the district. Saturday afternoons were for baseball.
- Julius raised horses *Had some \$600 worth bought our first Ford car.*
- Sheep shearing and lambing was a main event on the Neilson farm. Sometimes there were "bum" lambs that had to be fed with a bottle. Mutton was a common dinner menu.
- Papa could milk cows and dip sheep. He thought that sheep dip cured a lot of afflictions. Once when Verna had an infected ingrown toenail, she soaked it in sheep dip until the whole toe nail came off.
- **1933** Julius fell down when he went to turn out the sheep and couldn't get up. He had a stroke and he was only 44. He was paralyzed for some time. The stroke was thought to be from an earlier injury, when he tried to jump a cow with his horse. He had walked across the field, in the dark to home teach a family, the night before. He said that he never felt better. When he had the stroke, he said that it was like someone hit him on the head with a huge board. He laid for two weeks and could not move. Ed Berzay took him to Lethbridge to a chiropractor. He walked with a cane the next day. The family was so happy and excited to see him walk again, they all buzzed around trying to help him. He never really regained his strength completely, but did enjoy a trip to Salt Lake with Morgan and Elva.
- ³⁵**1935** Blenda and her nine children came for the summer with their seven boys and two girls. This was a summer of which the family has many wonderful memories. They had bought an old school bus and converted into a motor home. The back seats were beds and they carried a stove and food. There were no stores or motels then. Sam had to stay home to work, so John [age 17] did the driving. There was no plumbing, electricity or running water. The water had to be carried

from the spring across the road. The iron was heated on the stove and the washer was run with gas.

- The Salt Lake cousins were the only cousins the Neilson kids had except Freddy Puzey who was a cousin to Julius. Freddy's mother, Emily, was a sister to Grandpa August Swen. Uncle Fred and Freddy Puzey came from Champion to visit when Aunt Blenda's family was there. It was a crowd but everyone enjoyed the visit so much that the cousins became good friend for the rest of their lives. Blenda and Olga had a wonderful visit as well. Katherine said she did even hear Uncle Julius say a cross word.
- Threshing crews---Harvesting was a big affair as the threshing crews moved from farm to farm. A cook car and a bunk house for the men was pulled around with the threshing outfit. There were dozen's of men to feed three big meals, three times a day besides two lunches. Each man had a bundle rack and he had to care for four horses. Out in the field there was a spike pitcher to make sure the load was full. Elva cooked on the cook car one year during the depression time. Her wages were all given to Pa to pay for the crop being threshed. She said she did not care as we all got what we needed. It seemed there was very little pay for all the work of planting and harvesting the crop. Wheat sold for nineteen cents a bushel.
- **1936** Elva went to Salt Lake to the LDS Business College. She lived with Uncle Sam and Aunt Blenda and their nine children. She walked to school which was on South Temple from Aunt Blenda's home on 76B St. One day Elva saw a car run into a gas pump and blow up. She also saw the show "Rose Marie" that was just out. She said that when she heard "Oh Canada" she felt like standing right up in the theater. Sometimes she ironed for neighbors for a little spending money. When Elva came home, she had some nice dresses. She made one of the over to fit skinny Verna. She also bought one for her a white ruffled dress that she got on sale. Aunt Verna remembers wearing the dress to sing with Ralph between acts of a play and also when she played the part of "Rosie" a Jewish girl.

1937 During the summer, Elva had a job as a secretary for the Cardston Jubilee Celebration. During this time she became reacquainted with a Morgan Smith fellow. Their courtship was not a long one, mostly just during that summer. Aunt Verna remembers the week end that Elva and Morgan decided to get married. Delbert, Verna, Elva, Morgan, Elaine and Dick Sommerfeldt, Dan Henrie, and Fred Puzey all were in Waterton. They had a great time. Morgan was trying to interest Freddy in Delaine Smith. Some of them went fishing in Cameron Lake. Verna caught three trout. Morgan fried the fish and seemed proud of her for catching them. All she did was drag a line behind the kayak.